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Santas sweep the city

St. Nick's army hit the streets on Saturday to spread Christmas cheer.

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Canvas offers an outlet for pain

Kong Ning grew up on the Inner Mongolian frontier and advocated for death row inmates.

Now she wants to unload those memories of pain on her canvas.



Born in a blast



Zhan Wang made a name for himself with his stainless steel scholar rocks. This time, he's left the peaceful garden décor at home to explore chaos.

His new exhibition at the Ullens Center for Contemporary Art attempts to capture the chaotic beauty of the big bang with suspended fragments and high-speed video.

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Israeli seeks the stones of ancestors

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Cover bands pay homage to Beatles

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Chinatown memories saved in film

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Student deaths raise questions of bus safety

By Zhao Hongyi

The Legislative Affairs Office of the State Council began drafting new school bus safety laws in response to a string of fatal bus accidents that killed numerous students during the past several weeks.

A school bus carrying 47 pupils crashed into a river in Xuzhou, Jiangsu Province on Monday. The accident killed 15 students and wounded 11.

Investigators learned that the bus was operated by a private driver with no qualifications and rented from an owner who was not licensed to rent buses.

The bus had a maximum capacity of 52 students. While the school says the bus was operated within that capacity, surviving students say there were more than 60 people on the bus at the time of the crash.

On the same day, another bus carrying 59 students collided with a truck in Foshan, Guangdong Province, injuring 35 students and killing one.

Another school bus in Zhumadian City, Henan Province, also collided with a truck, killing two students and critically injuring seven on December 3.

On November 16, a school bus carrying 64 kindergarten students struck a coal truck, killing 21 children and wounding 43.

These are only the most serious bus accidents: there have been less fatal accidents reported almost daily.

The surge in accidents this year caught the attention of Premier Wen Jiabao, who ordered the Legislative Affairs Office to work on a new draft regulation that would hold school buses to higher safety requirements.

A working draft was released



The surge in school bus accidents is catching the attention of the government. It has pledged to pass new regulation on school bus safety. CFP Photo

the day before the accident in Xuzhou, Jiangsu Province.

The draft states the responsibilities of the schools, government bodies, traffic agencies and bus producers. It lists conditions and priorities for the operation of school buses, like how to apply for an operating license and what priorities school buses can expect on the road.

But the draft avoided stipulating who would be responsible for paying for school buses and their drivers, preferring to leave the issue up to city governments and school administrators.

In July 2010, the national General Administration of Quality Supervision, Inspection and Quarantine and Standardization Administration released a series of regulations to govern the technical requirements of school buses.

According to the document, school buses must be fireproof, seats must serve a protective function and the bus

face must have a "big nose" to absorb the force in the event of a crash.

It also requires drivers to obey the stop signs displayed by a school bus when students are boarding and exiting the bus, and requires several emergency exits throughout the vehicle.

These standards have been ignored due to their expensive requirements.

Statistics published at an education forum this month in Beijing show that the country has only 29,000 buses capable of meeting the qualifications: about 10 percent of the nation's total.

"Operation of school buses requires the cooperation of more than just the authorities," said Huang Yi, a spokesman for the State Administration of Work Safety.

"We hope this issue can be successfully resolved with the cooperation of city government, traffic authorities, school management, bus operators and producers," Huang said.

Many schools and kindergartens lease common commercial vehicles for use as school buses.

The recent school bus disasters led another discussion of the donation of 23 school buses by the Chinese government to Macedonia. Many opponents said the government should be subsidizing the use of such buses domestically rather than sending them abroad.

Officials said the donation was a commercial gesture by Yutong Bus, a vehicle producer in Henan Province. However, they did not address the suggestion that the government play a role in subsidizing bus use.

Most school buses are used by students who live in the suburbs and commute to a school in the downtown city center.

The municipal government said this week that it would give priority to school buses in the suburbs. Students living downtown currently rely on public transportation.

Competition seeks start-up ideas on campus

By Zhao Hongyi

A competition to encourage students to start their own business began this weekend at the China Millennium Monument in Beijing.

Called the 2011 China Postal Saving Bank Cup Campus Start-ups Competition, the event is one of the government's many efforts to help students create job opportunities in an increasingly competitive market.

The Beijing municipal government is attempting to position the city as a creative metropolis and incubator of creative businesses.

"After years of effort, young students are finally becoming enthusiastic about entrepreneurship," said Yang Lixian, deputy secretary of the China Communist Youth League Beijing Committee.

"What we need is creative ideas, market analysis, venture capital and professional supervision," he said.

This is the third annual session of the start-up competition.

Organizers plan this year to focus more on students' creative ideas for repackaging traditional and rural culture and ideas that have room for team work and the possibility of good economic returns.

The Postal Savings Bank and Youth League Beijing Committee are joint organizers.

Contributing organizers include the Cheung Kong Design and Research Center of Cheung Kong Graduate School of Business, KAB Start-up Education and Beijing Youth Daily.

The postal bank will provide awards to the winners, the center will provide professional supervision and KAB will provide training.

The competition will focus more on the writing of business initiative and is accepting applications through December 26.

Winners will be eligible for financing support from the Postal Saving Bank for their projects.

Convention aims to boost cultural economy

By Li Zhixin

The municipal government held its most recent salon at the China National Convention Center on Monday.

Organized with the theme "Old Beijing Gets Moving," its side exhibits included models of local buildings and select local cultural goods. A 394-meter screen played an eye-catching stage performance during the event.

Lu Wei, a member of the Standing Committee of the Beijing Municipal Party Committee and the head of

Information Department of Beijing Government, said the city remained dedicated to improving its cultural industry. He said it would issue new policies to promote the fusion of culture, science and technology.

The cultural and creative industry currently accounts for 12 percent of Beijing's GDP.

"The cultural and creative industry is a cornerstone of the green and low-carbon economy, but it has much room to grow," he said.

Lu said Beijing will estab-

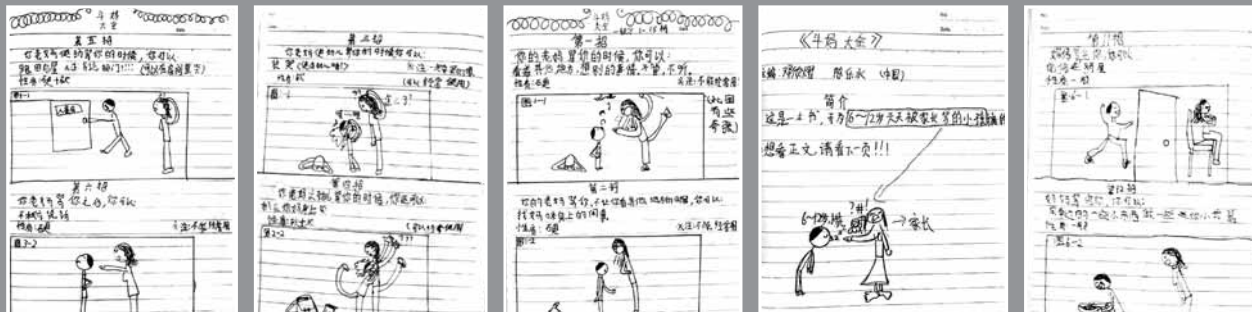


Lu Wei declares the government's resolution to boost cultural economy. Photo by Li Zhixin

lish more international cooperation agreements and set up an exchange platform for cultural

and creative products to promote Beijing and Chinese culture to the world.

Girls' guide to battling moms goes viral



The cartoons list more than 20 ways for children to deal with an angry mother.

Photos from Sohu Weibo

By Han Manman

A new series of cartoons that outline tactics children can use to battle overly critical mothers is making the rounds online.

Labeled as "a guidebook for children 6 to 12 who face frequent scolding," the cartoons list more than 20 ways in which children can deal with an angry mother.

The series is being drawn by the 10-year-olds Chen Leshui and Deng Xinyi, two Beijing girls who began sharing in a notebook with ballpoint pen.

Each tip, from bursting into tears and crying on mom's shoulder to threat-

ening to run away, is drawn in vivid detail and accompanied by humorous notes.

Chen drew her first picture in the series after being scolded for scoring poorly on an exam. But it was her father who made her famous by uploading photos of the notebook to his Sohu Weibo.

That first guide picture has been forwarded almost 100,000 times.

The creativity of the young girls amazed not only netizens, but also made some parents begin to consider other ways to encourage and direct their children.

"My husband asked me if

I had seen the 'Fight Scolding' notebook. I said I had, and he said I shouldn't yell at our child in the future," said Xu Ru, a mother with a 7-year-old daughter.

Chen's father said he put the drawing online to encourage parents to allow children to develop their own characteristics without the need for heavy criticism. He said his wife was not the "dragon mother" portrayed in the drawings.

"I really oppose this kind of parenting. It is needless interference in children's lives," he said.

Earlier this year, Yale Law School professor Amy Chua, a self-described "tiger

mother," became the subject of international scorn after she described her merciless upbringing of her daughters Lulu and Sophia.

When Chua's controversial memoir was published this year, it highlighted a chasm between parenting approaches. Many saw the way she raised her daughters as ludicrously harsh, while others considered it a sensible approach to preparing her children for a competitive world.

The cartoons reflect modern problems with Chinese family education, said Yu Qinfang, an education expert at the Beijing Academy of Edu-

cational Sciences.

According to a survey of 104 children and their parents, Yu found that as many as 52 percent of primary school students hated being urged to do things by their mothers.

Not giving children enough time and pushing them to do numerous tiny tasks can frustrate children. Parents are often oblivious to the negative effects of this kind of child rearing, Yu said.

She said needless prodding can cause a buildup of negative feelings within the child, and that parents should learn to scold less and be more patient.

Seniors seek love, not furniture at IKEA

By Han Manman

Single retirees who are looking for love might find it at their nearest IKEA outlet — along with free coffee.

The IKEA family membership card, more popular for its free coffee than its discounts, has attracted many seniors to use the Swedish store as a venue for meeting romantic partners.

The phenomenon is most pronounced in Shanghai.

Each week, elderly acquaintances gather to enjoy complimentary coffee and hope for conversation to turn to romance.

"You can find a boyfriend or girlfriend, or just make friends and chat. It makes you a little bit happier," said a 50-year-old woman surnamed Ge, who retired this year.

Ge said she chose IKEA because of its environment and safety.

"It's not appropriate to scope out men at bars, clubs or Karaoke joints," she said.

After a spate of altercations and realizing that seniors were taking seats away from paying customers, managers of the Shanghai IKEA outlet decided to take action.

"We welcome our members to come enjoy a cup of coffee and the privileges that come with being part of the club, but we can't have people taking advantage of the situation," said Yin Lifang, public relations manager of an IKEA store in Shanghai.

"We're in the business of home decor, not matchmaking."

Yin said the crowd has, at times, been as large as 700 people.

To keep order, they created a special roped off zone for sitting, allowing more tables to be open for shop-

pers who wanted warm tilapia, not hot dates.

They also posted a notice at the entrance of the cafeteria, asking the group to disband.

"IKEA would hereby like to inform this group and its organizers: Your behavior is affecting the normal operations of the IKEA cafeteria," the notice said.

"I know it's not appropriate, because this is a money-making business, but we have nowhere else to go," Ge said. "The best thing would be if we had places like this in our own community. Even if there was no coffee or tea, we could bring our own."

Cui Xiaodan, who works for a local security company, said the phenomenon is not unusual. Her company's stock exchange hall also attracts an unusual number of aged loiterers.

"Most of our clients are



Many seniors use IKEA as a venue for meeting romantic partners.

managing stocks at home, but the old people feel lonely at home and come to the stock exchange hall to find someone to talk to," Cui said, adding that she once saw them eating hotpot in the exchange hall.

"China has become an aging society with many old singles," said Sun Pengbiao, deputy director of the Shanghai Research Center on Aging. "They need to make friends or they will feel lonely."

"We can't blame them. Instead we should be finding a better solution," he said.

He asked enterprises and business organizations like IKEA to provide free places for elders to meet or hold events. He also suggested the government offer financial support to such enterprises and organizations to reduce their burden.

Photo provided by Elliott Xu

Broadcast battle off limits to local fansubbers

By Annie Wei

It has been almost a year since Youku and Tudou walked home from their IPOs with bags of money.

Today, the former piracy havens are buying the rights to broadcast popular shows from home and abroad and giving Chinese viewers a legal way to keep up with their favorite series.

But going legal has put an incredible drain in the number of shows available.

Sohu.com has only four of the latest American shows: *Nikita*, *The Big Bang*, *Gossip Girl*

and *Terra Nova*. New episodes come out only every two to three weeks, often with horrible subtitle translations and missing scenes.

It's a far cry from the quality that viewers came to expect after watching fansubs of the shows.

But fansubs are no longer an option. The loose organizations of hobbyists who collaborated to create subtitles for each new episode are now finding their websites forcefully shut down after a decade of mainstream acceptance.

Dawn of fansubs

The Chinese fansubbing scene has its roots in the late 1990s, when students began taking advantage of high-speed Internet access to pirate the latest foreign movies, TV dramas and cartoons.

Many high school students were especially passionate about Japanese comics, so cartoons from the country were an early target.

Fansubbers soon branched out to work on Japanese, Korean and American shows. Within 11 years, there were many fansubbing groups.

Members are usually between the ages of 20 and 30 and are students enrolled in a foreign language major or young bilingual office workers.

Chen Xin, one fansubber, finished high school in 2006. He joined a known fansubbing group during his summer break because he was obsessed with the Japanese cartoon *Mobile Suit Gundam SEED*. He contributed to the group throughout his four college years but left last year after finding a job in a Japanese company.

"College students are the main members because they have the most free time," Chen said. "We kept in touch over QQ and rarely knew each other's real names and ages."

Chen said his fansubbing group had more than 300 members, but fewer than 100 were active and only 40 were regular contributors. Whenever a new show premiered, they would hold a QQ conference to decide who should lead the project.

A 25-minute Japanese cartoon takes five to six people at least five hours of work to complete. Sometimes the fansubbers would work through several nights to be the first to release a show.

"Quality translation is the

soul of fansubbing," Chen said.

When a new episode finished airing at 10 pm in Japan, Chen and other members would spend two to three hours downloading a rip of the show. Their first draft of the translation would be completed in two to three hours. After that came subtitle timing and editing work.

"Most of the time, I could finish uploading the new episode by 7 or 8 am the next day. After that, I would go to class directly," Chen said.

ViKi wins funding

While Chinese fansubbers were working to bring in foreign shows, a few stepped up to introduce domestic TV shows to foreign viewers.

Among the first Chinese shows to be fansubbed for foreign viewers were *The Twins*, *Soldier, Go!*, *The Pearl Princess - Where Are We Going?* and *No Sincerity, No Disturb*.

Among the many fansubbing groups, ViKi.com seems like the first to be building a business model.

Hollywood accounts for only 15 percent of the world's film and TV output each year. The rest falls into obscurity due to language barriers.

Seeking to pick up the 85 percent that falls through the cracks, ViKi designed a video sharing community that would enable each episode to be quickly translated into several languages.

The popular Chinese show *Startling by Each Step* had its English subtitles completed by ViKi, from which it was translated again into French, German, Thai, Turkish and Vietnamese.

Razmig Hovhannian, CEO of ViKi, said in October it had received \$20 million in venture capital from the BBC and SK Telecom.



Fansubbed videos used to be easy to find on the web. The closure of several major group sites is making them more difficult to procure. Photos provided by Google.com



ViKi purchases the rights to a show and then crowdsources the translation on its website. Users can fill in missing subtitles using a program available on the website.

Chinese fansubbing groups require members who live abroad to obtain the source material and upload it to the subtitling team.

ViKi's platform removes this

barrier by letting any viewer participate in watching and translating the show legally.

The website has seen amazing user growth. One of its most successful shows is a Korean drama that has been translated into 40 languages. Many translations are completed within a day of the show's upload.

The huge number of users brings advertising revenue to ViKi, and the subtitles give users a reason to come back and interact. The site has helped 25 shows from three countries to debut on Hulu and Netflix, two popular video sites in the US.

Strict policy

Aside from financial problems, Chinese fansubbers face other obstacles - buying Web space requires members to contribute their own money under their own names.

ViKi's business model may

be a tough transition for the groups, said Li Liang, a leading fansubber.

Li said the Chinese fansubbing scene mirrors what Taiwan had only a decade ago. At that time, the population was only gradually becoming aware of copyrights. Many fansub groups attempted to reinvent themselves as agencies.

On the mainland, most shows sell their broadcasting rights directly to companies like Qiyi, Tudou and Youku. These rights enable the sites to get the source material even before broadcast and beat the fansubbers to any release.

The inability to be first to release a show has made many fansubbers throw in the towel, even though the quality of their subtitles are often abysmal.

A few groups are trying to work with the video sites or copyright holders to do a better translation job than the often backward and rushed state-owned translation companies.

"The mainland isn't Taiwan. Even if we say we are developing the culture industry and have policies to bring in foreign media - like Japanese comics and cartoons - I don't think a private company can ever be approved to introduce them," Li said.

The government's harsh regulations and censorship of foreign shows makes it easier for a company like ViKi to work with foreign companies to introduce China's shows to the world rather than to bring the world's shows to China, Li said.

Decade in WTO

China's decade in the World Trade Organization (WTO) thrust the country into the top spot in industries ranging from textiles to cars.

Now, through trade surpluses, the nation has become the world's largest holder of foreign exchange reserves, now exceeding \$3 trillion, up from about \$212 billion in 2001.

President Hu Jintao, speaking in Beijing at a special forum marking the 10th anniversary, stressed the country would push ahead with economic reform and openness.

Hu said reform and opening of the country's economy to other nations will continue to underpin the country's development.

Xinhua, in a special report, said the country's admittance to the organization heralded unprecedented economic growth, making the country the world's second-largest economy after the US and the largest commodity exporter.

Hu said China will implement a more proactive strategy and open more areas to the outside world. He called the country's entry into the WTO a decade ago a major event in the development of the policy.

Joining the WTO and the introduction of international rules helped China improve its socialist market economy, said Long Guoqiang, director of the State Council's Development Research Center.

(Agencies)



Vehicles in Shanghai harbor to be exported to foreign markets.
CFP Photo/Hua Xiaer

The third eye WTO ride turns fears into fruit

When the country wrapped up 16 years of hard bargaining to secure long-awaited membership to the WTO on December 11, 2001, Chinese firms were probably more alarmed than relieved.

With tariffs to be slashed and restrictions on foreign rivals to be eased, a shaky future seemed to loom for some of the country's least competitive industries, notably banking, agriculture and auto making.

Ten years later, those industries are holding up well, if not thriving.

The country's lenders are among the most profitable banks in the world and were barely hurt in the financial crisis. But back in 2001, having just survived the Asian financial crisis and freed of some of their massive

bad loans with government aid, the state's four major state-owned banks remained insolvent as a whole.

Today, those banks are healthier than 10 years ago and have passed the test of the global financial crisis with good asset quality and profitability, said Ba Shusong, an economist with the Development Research Center under the State Council.

Ba attributed the success to the government-sponsored reforms, limited market openness and its position in the global value chain.

In the manufacturing sector, one of its weakest links was the car industry, which had been protected by high tariffs and offered few choices for Chinese consumers before entry to the WTO.

High costs and weak brands and

technology were among the biggest disadvantages of his company compared with foreign rivals, said Hu Maoyuan, chairman of the Shanghai Automotive Industry Corporation (SAIC), the country's leading auto maker.

By July 2006, China had lowered the tariff on imported finished automobiles to 25 percent from 70 to 80 percent before WTO accession.

Facing drastically tougher competition, SAIC Group managed to reduce its production costs 30 percent within the five-year grace period after WTO entry, while investing heavily to improve quality, technology and services, Hu said.

In 2010, SAIC Group ranked eighth in world auto sales, selling 3.58 million units. **(Xinhua)**

宽视野 宽生活

尚色SUNSHINE

时尚双周刊

尚色SUNSHINE
时尚双周刊
CHRISTMAS GIFT
此致·爱礼
12月16-18日

此致 爱礼

那些欢乐的、出位的、
不三俗的礼物们！

这世界有太多事不归我们管，但至少我们可以决定，圣诞将至之时，送什么样的礼物给自己和爱的人。同时我们还可以兴奋地期待，收到一件独一无二的礼物。《尚色》希望在圣诞礼物这件小事上，为你打开更宽的视野，唤起你追求极致的热情。

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华丽亮片
容易上手的派对妆
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北青传媒 尚色SUNSHINE

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联合出品：北青传媒、《尚色SUNSHINE 职业女性》
年度新戏《别跟我来这套》，隆重推出，敬请关注。

Christmas chill unlikely

Domestic demand bolsters holiday business

By Huang Daohen

If the Christmas of 2008 was tough, then this Christmas should be even tougher for decoration manufacturers.

The global financial crisis of 2008, initially seen as a historic slump in the overseas orders of Christmas decorations, may have simply been a warning.

Stagnant growth and economic contraction continue to plague Europe and the Americas, creating a freeze in the holiday industry once combined with China's rising wages and material costs.

But where foreigners are spending less, young Chinese are spending more.

The industry is experiencing an increased domestic demand due to the number of young Chinese eager to celebrate the holiday in Hollywood style.



Decorated trees and street lights have brought excitement to residents in front of an international financial center in Beijing.
IC Photo/Stephen Shaver

Glitz of Christmas

The past few weeks have been hectic for Fan Hao.

Fan, 34, owns a small Christmas shop in the Sanlitun area by the foreign embassies. Like many shop owners on the street, she is busy helping shoppers find their ideal Christmas decorations.

But this year, Fan is seeing more Chinese shoppers looking for Christmas trees and decorations.

She also runs an online store on Taobao.com, a major e-commerce site, where the quantity of daily orders has doubled.

"European holidays are trendy for young people. It seems there is no other explanation for it," she said.

Though Christmas Day is not a national holiday, these days it is celebrated as much as any traditional festival.

"People around the world are celebrating this holiday and we simply just want to have some fun too," said Lillian Shi, 26, who works for an American consulting firm in Beijing.

But Shi's idea of fun involved more than getting drunk on eggnog on Christmas Eve.

"I'm planning to have a theme party at my apartment and invite a couple of friends over for dinner," she said. "We will exchange gifts and sing songs. It will be a good time."

Shi has become busy recently, decorating her house with a Christmas tree and preparing food and gifts.

But young people are not the only ones busy preparing for the holiday: many Chinese parents seem to be getting into the spirit.

"I've kept an eye out for a present these days," said Liu Yang, the mother of a 14-year-old girl who visited Fan's store on Tuesday.

"Children are celebrating Christmas. As parents we have to join in and buy gifts for them so there is no gap," she said.

Liu bought an iPod Touch for her daughter that afternoon.

Boost for business

But most Chinese people who celebrate Christmas are not Christians and have never seen a Bible.

Incomplete statistics show that only fewer than 2 percent of the nation claims any denomination of Christianity as a faith.

Many of the people in Sanlitun who this reporter spoke to were completely unaware of the religious origins of Christmas.

When asked if she knew why foreigners celebrated Christmas, Fan said she had no idea. "I think I heard that it had something to do with a foreigner called Jesus, but that's all I know."

Ignorance apparently does little to dent the booming Christmas business machine.

From bars to restaurants and homes to shopping malls, Santa Claus seems to pop up on doorways that were traditionally reserved for China's gods.

The holiday primarily associated with European culture seems to be becoming a yearly tradition in China. And that's good news for the holiday decoration industry, which is suffering from declining overseas orders, said Wen Yijun, a senior analyst at Oriental Securities in Beijing.

Wen's view was echoed by Chen Jinlin, head of the Christmas Products Industry Association in Yiwu, the country's manufacturing center in Zhejiang Province.

"Christmas is like Chinese New Year – even poor people have to celebrate it," Chen was quoted by London-based *Financial Times* as saying.

"Hotels, kindergartens, schools, supermarkets – they all have Christmas decorations," he said.

Chen said the city's Christmas decoration industry is seeing strong domestic sales this year, where Christmas decorations are becoming an increasingly popular marketing tool for local retailers.

Yiwu's dilemma

Yiwu is a unique city. Every year,

it produces more than 50 percent of the world's Christmas decorations, according to the city's Christmas Products Association.

Previously, this time of the year was one of the busiest as factories rushed to export billions of dollars worth of Christmas goods, like artificial trees and ornaments.

But after the global financial crisis in 2008, many manufacturers are not feeling too merry, Wen said.

"Most of the markers in Yiwu rely on overseas orders, so they were hit hard by the financial crisis and rising production costs," Wen said.

Customs records show that the European market is more affected than American market. Exports to Spain, for instance, fell sharply.

Though this year has seen a recovery and Yiwu has a 10 percent increase in exports, Chen hopes the future will be in the domestic market.

Businessmen agreed.

Yang Jiexin, a local Christmas decoration maker in Yiwu, said his factory is now emphasizing domestic sales.

"We've noticed the government's policy is to promote domestic consumption," Yang said. "We are making an effort to change our focus accordingly."

Yang said his firm, a small factory with 50 workers, has had no luck in securing more overseas orders. However, his firm's sales volumes at home this year increased 10 percent.

But there are differences between domestic and foreign buyers, Yang said.

Local buyers want the more extravagant and expensive Christmas items found more often in Hollywood entertainment than in the home. In China, decorations are marketing tools.

Yang said consumer ignorance makes the domestic market even more profitable.

"Foreigners know how much these things are supposed to cost. Domestic customers have just started celebrating Christmas, so they will spend whatever we charge," he said.

Market watch

iPad mark dispute a tough lesson

By Huang Daohen

Apple's upcoming iPad3 may have to find a new name before it can be sold on the Chinese mainland market, based on a recent court ruling.

Last Tuesday, Shenzhen Municipal Intermediate Court rejected a long-ongoing lawsuit by Apple, which has attempted to arrest ownership of the iPad trademark in China.

The trademark currently belongs to Proview Technology Shenzhen, a struggling subsidiary of Hong Kong-headquartered Proview.

In 2000, the company registered a trademark for the term "iPad" in several countries, including the European Union, Mexico, South Korea, Singapore, Indonesia, Thailand, Vietnam and China.

Apple encountered the trademark problems when preparing for its launch of the initial iPad tablet in 2006. At the time, it attempted to purchase the global trademark for iPad from Proview Electronics (Taiwan) for \$55,100.

However, Proview Technology Shenzhen said that deal didn't include the mainland trademark.

Shelly Wen, a researcher at Renmin University of China, said the wording of the 2006 deal is the heart of the issue.

The court found that because Proview's Taiwan subsidiary wasn't the actual unit to register the trademark, its contract is invalid, Wen said. Apple's only other way to acquire the iPad trademark in China would be to appeal for trademark cancellation.

"But that also looks hopeless, unless they can provide sufficient evidence that Proview knew about the iPad at the time it registered the mark (in 2000)," she said.

Market analysts said Apple will have to be prepared to pay through the nose for continued use of the mark as the company prepares to open more stores.

Proview Shenzhen is seeking 10 billion yuan (\$1.5 billion) in damages for use of the mark to date.

Wen called the trademark dispute a rookie error. "If foreign investors want to purchase the rights to Chinese trademarks, there are basic steps they need to take," he said.

The first one, and possibly most obvious, is to make sure the entity selling the rights to a trademark is actually the owner of the mark. This can be confusing with companies such as Proview International, which has many subsidiaries.

The buyer should also ensure that the trademark and the transfer of its related certificates is listed in the agreement, Wen said.

"Apple should never have signed that 2006 agreement since it didn't include the transfer of any of the necessary documents."

TV commercials puzzle

Does commercial-free drama make viewers happier?

Viewers can enjoy commercial-free television dramas starting January 1.

ICPhoto



By Huang Daohen

Commercials during TV dramas can be annoying; your favorite shows can be interrupted by a Toyota ad for what seems like the 100th time, and the McDonald's ad just isn't that funny anymore.

But here's some good news: the government recently ordered a ban on broadcasters airing commercials during TV programs lasting more than 45 minutes. Stations that break the ban could face suspension.

The announcement, effective next month, was made by the State Administration of Radio, Film and Television (SARFT). The country's media watchdog said the move was in line with the spirit of a recent Politburo meeting and came as part of the country's reform of the cultural sector.

"TV and radio are the mouthpiece of the Party and the people, an important propaganda front in cultural thought," said a statement on the ministry's website.

The commercial ban will ensure the continuity of the audience's viewing experience and in the long run will "help TV dramas develop in a scientific and healthy manner," it added.

And indeed, commercial-free drama is welcomed by the public. An online survey on Sina Weibo shows that about 91 percent of 10,000-plus respondents are keen to see an end of TV advertising.

They complained that commercials nowadays are becoming increasingly intrusive and "sometimes it's more like when you watch ads, a TV drama pops up at a sudden," wrote a netizen named Skywolf.

Still, about 7 percent of respondents oppose the halt, as many believe administrative regulations should not be too involved in the market.

The ban was SARFT's latest efforts over the past few months to regulate the nation's increasing commercial breaks. Last month, the ministry halted sex-related commercials on radio and TV. In September, it also told Hunan Television to suspend its talent contest Super Girl.

Expert view

Commercial ban, a double-edged sword

While more people are going online for entertainment, how will the government's latest commercial ban affect business? Yao Yin, research director at the local consulting firm Qingxue, said the ban would deal a heavy blow to the television stations.

According to *Beijing Youth Daily*, about 30 percent of Internet users in China now no longer watch television, and 40 percent are watching less. In Beijing, a survey found that only 38 households out

of 100 now have their TVs on every evening, down from 75 out of 100 three years ago.

When people do watch TV, dramas, like love stories or historical sagas, remain the most popular. Yao said the ban would lead to at least a 20 billion yuan loss for the country's television stations as ads in the middle of TV dramas bring in about 40 to 50 percent of revenue.

Only about 20 percent of the revenue comes from embedded ads.

But Yao said broadcasters would find a way round the ban.

"Like any government policy, it is a double-edged sword. It affects the ad revenue but brings more people to the TV again," she said.

One possible solution is for stations to lengthen commercial slots before and after each episode, Yao said. Or they could reduce the time of each episode to 30 minutes so they can legally insert ads between the show.

Comment

Watch it online

I wonder whether the ban can really work. Thanks to market power, the ads will return via stealth, perhaps being written directly into scripts. That's happened in the US. When cable television first came out in the States, it said that you would never have to pay for a program, and less than two years later the commercials started appearing: a so-called 30-minute program is filled with 9-minute commercials.

The suggestion here is to watch TV on the Internet. You can stop it and replay it at any time, but you will have to pay for it eventually unless you watch pirated copies.

— Ronny Rim, sales representative

Good for the youth

Finally, the government did something. I rarely watch television that much, but when I do with my husband in the evening, it is very annoying to have so many commercials during the program. They somehow appear just after the theme music.

I am not sure if a total

ban should be enacted, but certainly fewer commercials should be shown during the programs. The quality of the commercials nowadays is especially terrible, as there are more sex-related commercials.

— Wang Xinzhong, teacher

Caution for obesity

TV shows without commercials is cool but it's no good for your health. Without commercials, you would probably stick to the TV set, and that will harm your eyesight, especially for children. It will also cause obesity.

Besides, while everyone is sitting in front of the TV set with no one to do the house work, it might create problems for families.

— Hou Lin, local resident

A dilemma

That's a dilemma. Advertising is a pain, but you can't have your shows without it. You cannot ban the commercials because that is what pays the dramas. Without commercials, the TV station will not be able to pay the bills to air good shows or make a reasonable profit.

With no revenue, the viewers will need to pay a higher fee for access to programming. There is no free lunch.

— Shirley Jiang, account executive

Let the market rule

Let the market do its job. The government should stay out and just keep an eye on it. If the government regulates too much, there won't be a free market. Then the quality of programming might go down, and stations could possibly shut down — though many are funded by the government. It won't be good for real art or creativity.

The markets will decide what they should do, and they will do what they want. If the viewer does not like a program due to excessive ads then he or she will simply switch the channel. And if all the channels are popping up with too many ads then they can just turn the TV off.

Still, a perfect market needs to be regulated. Otherwise, like some Western economies, it can become chaos and anarchy.

— Chen Junjie, analyst

Debate of the week

Tobacco researcher dubbed 'a killer'

A newly elected academician of the Chinese Academy of Engineering who is studying how to reduce toxicity in cigarettes has been accused of promoting smoking.

Xie Jianping was dubbed the "killer academician" after his inclusion on a list of new members attracted a rash of complaints on online forums.

The 52-year-old deputy director of the Zhengzhou Tobacco Research Institute studies how to reduce tar and nicotine in cigarettes and uses Chinese herbs to lower toxicity.

Xie has won second prize in the National Science and Technology Progress Award three times. He has also been accredited as an expert making "outstanding contributions" to the tobacco industry and enjoys subsidies from the State Council.

"The election of Xie is a shame to the country's scientific community and the CAE," Yang Gonghuan, director of the National Tobacco Control Office, said on her microblog.

"A man who studies how to kill people more efficiently can be an academician?" Yang said. Xie's studies could mislead the public into believing smoking could be safe and help tobacco producers to sell more, she added.

Clean up 'overdue PhDs'

Some 857 PhD students in Chengdu's Southwest Jiaotong University who have failed to graduate on time are having a difficult time now as school authorities have stepped up roll management for postgraduate students, Chengdu Business reported.

The school has demanded that these students formally apply for extensions. If they still fail to complete their programs on time, they will face expulsion.

According to the university, the candidates had all been enrolled before 2006, with 253, 65 and 2 students having been enrolled in programs for at least 10, 15 and 21 years, respectively.

"I cannot believe this number. How can they not finish their studies in 20 years?" said Liu Ning, a PhD student at the university.

According to the regulations issued by the Ministry of Education in March 2005, the maximum years allowed for completing a degree should be clearly defined by each university.

(Agencies)

Israeli photographer tries to unearth the past

By Han Manman

As Jews fled Nazi Germany in the years before and during World War II, no destination was too exotic as long as it provided safety and shelter. Japanese-occupied Shanghai was one of the cities most willing to provide asylum. More than a half-century later, people in China are still trying to dig up information about this unique group of immigrants, whose memories barely survive with the current generation.

Few traces of the original refugees remain.

Dvir Bar-Gal, 46, has worked for a decade to restore Shanghai's Jewish past. This Shanghai-based Israeli photojournalist has raced against the rapid urban development of the city's suburbs to save certain gravestones that he calls "precious Jewish footprints in Shanghai."



Dvir Bar-Gal

Photo provided by South People Weekly

"In Jewish culture, it is very important to respect our ancestors and past," Dvir Bar-Gal said. He is an impressive man with a raw presence and a deep voice.

"The Jewish gravestones tell stories," he said. "They are remnants of the city's Jewish past and shall be respected."

He added that old Jewish gravestones can be found scattered across Shanghai's fields, along rivers, or used as construction blocks for pathways and walls.

It's all there for historical reasons.

During World War II, as many as 20,000 Jews took refuge in Old Shanghai.

Prior to 1951, there were four Jewish cemeteries in Shanghai, according to historic records. In 1951, these were moved to an international cemetery located in the western suburbs of the city. During the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976) the cemeteries were demolished and the graves and headstones were smashed and thrown away.

No one knew what happened to the graves and stones, nor how or where to look for them.

Bar-Gal estimates that there may have been around 4,000 Jews buried in Shanghai. But he couldn't find any trace of their gravestones other than sporadic pieces he discovered by chance.

His mission began by accident when he discovered a Hebrew tombstone dating back to the 1930s in a Shanghai antique shop in 2001.

"I first got news that two Jewish old headstones were up for sale in an antique shop in Shanghai," Bar-Gal said, adding that when he arrived with an Israeli friend, one of the stones had already been sold. They brought the other one.

Bar-Gal said they asked if the antique dealer had access to any more stones.

"At first he said it would take months to find another such stone. However, two days later the antique dealer called us saying he had more stones," Bar-Gal said. This was when he learned that



Bar-Gal hired teams of workers to dig out the headstones.

Photo provided by Dan Levin

Jewish headstones could be located even after almost 35 years without a trace.

Bar-Gal paid the dealer to take them to the place where the stones came from.

"He brought us to rural areas west of Shanghai. One by one, we found a number of stones, some broken, some intact," he said.

But Bar-Gal faced many obstacles to getting those gravestones and figuring out their backgrounds.

"The lack of paperwork is only a fraction of the problems I've encountered," he said. "Sometimes local villagers get suspicious when a foreigner wanders into their fields with a flashlight and a hoe."

Some marble slabs Bar-Gal found were put to use by local villagers as washboards, steps and even as part of their home foundations. "But most villagers were happy to sell the slabs to me for less than 100 yuan each."

Funded in part by a grant from the Sino-Judaic Institute at Stanford University, Bar-Gal

also hired teams of workers to dig out the headstones.

Bar-Gal said many stones were found from strange places as villagers would turn the stones upside-down for cultural reasons. Many Chinese villagers believe that tombstones bring bad luck, and therefore place them with the inscriptions on the underside, believing that they will no longer be considered tombstones once the inscriptions are no longer visible.

This local custom has magnified the difficulty of the search, since every time a suspected gravestone is discovered, it must be flipped over to be studied, Bar-Gal said.

In addition to unearthing the heavy blocks from fields and riverbeds, Bar-Gal also interviewed locals and slowly put together the pieces of Shanghai's puzzling Jewish history.

Bar-Gal has so far found more than 100 gravestones and about 30 families related with them, as well as some Christian gravestones.

One of those belonged to the grandmother of Ameri-

can Lily Klebanoff Blake, who several years ago joined Bar-Gal in Shanghai and traveled to the rural area where he had retrieved the stone from the riverbed. She also met the Chinese farmer who helped him recover her grandmother's marker.

"It was still covered in mud, but I felt compelled to show my respect for my grandmother by washing the mud off the gravestone," Blake said. "Touching the gravestone, I felt an uncanny connection to my grandmother, who died when I was four years old."

Bar-Gal set up a website (shanghaijewishmemorial.com) to keep a record of the gravestones he has discovered in Shanghai.

"More than 70 of the gravestones are still lying quietly in a warehouse, waiting for their grandsons and daughters to come back for a reunion," he said.

Besides his continued effort to find and figure out the identities of more gravestones, Bar-

Gal is also writing a book and making a documentary about the search and restoration of the Jewish graves.

To raise awareness of Jewish history in Shanghai, Bar-Gal has become a tour guide in recent years, taking Jewish tourists to explore Shanghai's Jewish past.

From time to time, he'll talk about the history of Jewish people in the city. His stories include how Jews first started businesses in Shanghai during the late Qing Dynasty (1644-1911) and how Jewish people managed to find a haven in Shanghai during World War II.

"My final goal is to make a respectful memorial that will be open for the public to visit to respect the history of the city and the people who lived and died in it," Bar-Gal said.

"The gravestones are a precious heritage of the Jewish presence in Shanghai," he said. "Jews share a passion to value our own history because it's a scattered history, and I feel responsible for continuing this project."

Locke says US considering issuing five-year visas to Chinese

By Han Manman

The US government is willing to start issuing five-year visas to Chinese nationals to lure more cash-flushed Chinese travelers to its shores, but only if China agrees to do the same for American citizens, said US ambassador to China Gary Locke.

"We'd like to issue five-year visas for Chinese visitors to the US for business, travel or study," Locke said on Wednesday during a ceremony held to celebrate the new record of the US handling Chinese visa applications.

The five-year visa would mean Chinese visitors would not need to reapply for visas every time they travel to the US within a five-year period. Currently, visitors with temporary tourist and business visas, also known as B1 or B2 visas, are only valid for one year.

"We've officially asked the government of China to also issue five-year visas for Americans as well," he said, indicating that Chinese government's



Gary Locke (right) issues a visa to a Chinese family.

Photo by Han Manman

decision will directly affect the US' final decision.

Figures provided by the US embassy show by the end of last week, the US consular officers adjudicated a record-breaking 1 million visas in China in this fiscal year –

an increase of more than 34 percent compared to last year, and double the number of visas adjudicated just five years ago.

During the last year, more than 160,000 student visas were issued to Chinese citizens

to study at US colleges and universities, and today 18 percent of all foreign students in the US are from China.

The ambassador said nearly 90 percent of those 1 million applications are issued upon application by US embassies

in Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, Shenyang and Chengdu.

More Chinese visitors would help create jobs in the US and help lift its sluggish economy, Locke said.

Other than longer visas, the US has also tried to shorten applicants' wait times to less than a week, opening more windows, adding 50 visa officials in the near future.

Locke said all the 50 visa officials can speak Chinese and are expected to arrive in China in the spring.

During the ceremony, the ambassador issued visas to six Chinese citizens who applied for visas at the beginning of the month.

At the ceremony, the ambassador became a guest visa official and interviewed applicants on the scene.

When he learned a Chinese family's purpose for visiting the US was to take their 3-year-old daughter to Disneyland in California, Locke became excited and said he always takes his children there as well.

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Gaggle of Santas sweeps through Beijing

By Anthony Tao

More than a hundred people, mostly expats, participated in the Beijing edition of SantaCon last Saturday, in which revelers dressed as Santa to spread holiday tidings around the city.

"I'm a big fan [of the event]," said Ben Redden, an account manager at a marketing agency, participating in the event for the second straight year. "Honestly, it's pretty wholesome fun. It's sort of a pub crawl mixed with a flash mob and good cheer."

The first SantaCon was held in 1994 in San Francisco, before spreading around the world. In 2006, around 70,000 Santas took over Moscow. A year later, the Guinness Book of World Records recognized the event when 13,000 Santas converged in Ireland. According to SantaCon.info, the event is done in 227 locations in 32 countries.

In Beijing – like most places – the goal was simple: to have fun. As the Beijing SantaCon website notes, the event is a "non-profit, non-political, non-religious and non-sensical Santa Claus convention celebration."

This year, it officially began at noon in two locations: Bang! Bang! Pizza in Shuangjing and Pyro Pizza in Wudaokou. Two groups of Jolly St. Nicks eventually made their way to Wangfujing, where more than 100 Santas mingled.

"First SantaCon for me – never expected that many Santas!" said YJ Tan, who works at the Singaporean embassy. She said she noticed quite a few Chinese Santas, too.

Most locals were witnesses,



SantaCon spreads Christmas cheer through town.

Photos by Ben Redden



SantaCon participants gather in front of Huxley's Bar near Houhai.

however, and they were mostly flabbergasted. But participants say the interaction is always positive.

"Lots of people were checking us out with wondering expressions, but they were pretty entertained when we sang and danced," Redden said.

And drank, of course.

Stops on the pub crawl

included Houhai's Zoom Club and Huxley's (a bar too small to fit everyone, so people gathered outside for a rousing round of caroling), Hot Cat Club, where there was a live band, Stumble Inn in Sanlitun and, finally, the nightclub Chocolate.

"Yeah, it might just be drunk expats in costumes," said Ellen Wong, who recalls

riding on a scooter with other Santas as they zipped down busy streets. "But onlookers seemed generally amused."

And why wouldn't they be? "There were some people who gave out candies to kids, who were surprisingly eager to take the candy and hang out with Santas," said Kathryn Jonas, who works at an NGO and was one of the event's official "herders," making sure people got to where they needed to be.

"Besides lots of photos, there were a couple of people [on the streets] who would randomly say, Ho ho ho! at you, and that was kind of cute," she added.

For others, SantaCon was a chance to participate in a global phenomenon: a spirited way to show the world that Christmas is just around the corner.

"I'd never done SantaCon

in the US, even though I had heard of it and knew it was popular in cities like New York and Washington DC," said Sam Dreiman, a consultant whose night ended at Stumble Inn singing Queen's classic anthem Bohemian Rhapsody "with every other drunk Santa in Beijing."

He said one of his favorite parts was "taking pictures with Chinese children and then giving them our Santa hats."

"Honestly speaking, I thought last year was a bit more fun than this year," said freelancer Sean Silbert. "I don't know the numbers, but it seemed like there was more people, and the venues seemed to be more fun for meeting people and Kris Kringle-watching."

He made sure to add, though: "I'm no Grinch – I'll do it again in a heartbeat."

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ICVS tips on how to leave China with one's pets

By Wei Ying

It's never too early to start preparing to take your pet abroad.

The International Center for Veterinary Service often hosts free events with step-by-step instructions on the exit process to help one prepare for leaving the country or moving to other Chinese cities with pets.

If you haven't been to one of their events, here is some basic information:

First you need to complete the exit process for China and then double-check the entry requirements for the country you are heading to.

That includes completing rabies vaccinations and getting an official immunity certificate. Pets should be vaccinated at least 30 days but not more than 12 months before departure.

Your pet must undergo a health exam not more than seven days before departure at the government run Beijing Entry/Exit Inspection and Quarantine Bureau animal hospital, Beijing Guan Shang Animal Hospital. The examination may include blood tests and stool checks. After-



Taking a pet in and out of a country needs to prepare in advance.

CFP Photo

ward, the pet will be issued a health certificate. The examination and tests cost around 1,000 yuan. Make sure to bring the pet's vaccination book and your passport.

Since November, the Guan Shang animal hospital has required all animals to be micro-chipped by the time of the exam. Microchips are required only by the hospital, not the government.

After you have the health certificate, you need to obtain an

exit permit and animal health certificate. The Entry-Exit Inspection and Quarantine Bureau has an office on the second floor of the Guan Shang animal hospital. It takes two business days to process and is valid for 14 days.

Different countries have different guidelines and requirements for pet entry. You can consult their embassies or Department of Agriculture or quarantine bureau for details.

For more detailed informa-

tion, please consult ICVS or their next event about this subject on January 14, 2012.

International Center for Veterinary Services

Where: 29 Liangmaqiao Lu, Chaoyang District
Open: 8 am - 8 pm
Tel: 8456 1939

Beijing Guan Shang Animal Hospital

Where: 7 Bei Sanhuan Zhong Lu, Chaoyang District
Open: 8:30 am - 10:30 pm
Tel: 6204 9631

ASK Beijing Today

Email your questions to: weiyi@ynet.com

Anyone know where I can get an STD self-testing kit in Beijing, and what it is called in Chinese? Or, is there somewhere I can go for 100 percent anonymous testing?

STD home testing kits are seldom seen in drug stores and pharmacies in Beijing, but you can get tested at the Chaoyang Center for Disease Control and Prevention (25 Huawei, Panjiayuan, Chaoyang District). If you are a foreigner who plans to get a work or study visa in China, you will have to get a full physical that includes STD testing, most notably for HIV.

How does one get birth control pills in Beijing? Are the implants available as well?

You can get birth control pills, called *biyunyao*, at any pharmacy. A month supply costs 30 to 130 yuan, depending on the brand. For implants, please consult a doctor from a hospital for more information.

(By Wei Ying)



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Art the cure for pain

By He Jianwei

Artist, poet and playwright Kong Ning says "life" began in her 40s. Her first 20 years were what she calls her unsettled period. From the ages of 20 to 30, she advocated for death row prisoners at a procuratorate. From 30 to 40, she worked as a lawyer to defend the rights of minorities.

For the last 13 years, she has devoted her time to painting, installation and performance art. "Art makes me find myself. Art has helped to cure my hurts in the past 40 years," she says.



Kong Ning

ing the police officer down the stairs. The policeman got up off the floor and rushed at her. Instinctively, Kong crouched and covered her head, expecting to be beaten. When the blows never came, she looked up

Kong looks like a soldier ready for combat at all times. She wears a black armored vest and a pair of black army boots – not because they suit her, but because they make her feel safe.

Her mother from Beijing met her father in Manzhouli and gave birth to her on the Inner Mongolian frontier in 1958.

It was there that Kong was raised to fear.

The Sino-Soviet split of the late 1950s and early 1960s resulted in tensions along the border between the two countries.

"I always saw Russian tanks on the border of my village," Kong said at Geluhua Building Sunday. Pointing to the skyscrapers outside the window, "Their tanks were about that far from our village, and the adults were anxious about the possibility of war."

A greater shock came with her father's suicide during the Cultural Revolution. In the wake of his death, her mother became her whole universe.

In 1971, her mother was ill and hospitalized in Shanghai. Hospital regulations prevented relatives from accompanying patients outside of visiting hours. To take care of her mother, Kong pleaded with the doctor to allow her a job in the hospital.

"At that time, I was only 13 years old. I was taller than most of my classmates. The jobs in our class wanted – changing up accounts and carrying the dead to the morgue," Kong said.

After the end of the Cultural Revolution, she and her mother returned to Beijing. Relatives helped her find a job at the procuratorate.

She received little education during her teenage years, but she was tall and strong enough to supervise death penalty cases. She soon became well known by her colleagues and public security officers.

Of note was one incident in 1983, when she was walking with four public security officers who were escorting a prisoner who had been sentenced to death. The police hustled the prisoner into the corridor of the court, and one of the officers kicked the prisoner down the stairs.

Kong, furious, responded by kick-

numbers. "I called the piece Blackboard, because I did not want to record their memory – I wanted to erase it," she said.

Kong resigned from the procuratorate in 1988 and became a lawyer, providing free legal aid to minorities. Because of her experience in the procuratorate, she accepted many cases to help people who had been sentenced to death to file an appeal.

She quickly became a successful lawyer, but abandoned her practice when her mother died in 2000. "My whole life was coming apart at the seams. I thought I would go crazy," she said.

Five months later, she checked into a mental hospital and stayed for 24 hours. She left when her daughter came and urged her to do something with her mother's home in Mentougou District.

She began to decorate the house by herself, sculpting thousands of red roses to line its interior and exterior walls. After four years, she finished the project and named it "Castle of the Rose."

Some friends who visited the house thought it was weird and a little bit scary, because all the roses were made of cement. This is a palace for my mother," she said.

In 2005, she began to paint her pain on canvas. She painted the face of her mother, then started painting a home in prison. Mongolian and prisoners in prison are the same as me," she says.

In Releasing, she painted a fearful death-row prisoner squatting on the right side of the painting. At the center are seven other prisoners overjoyed as they anticipate the release of death.

She has completed hundreds of oil paintings and more than 3,000 wash paintings during the past six years; few are shown to friends, and fewer still are exhibited.

Hong Kong director Tsai Hark is one of Kong's fans and used 30 of her oil paintings in his latest movie *Catching Monkey*.

"I still don't think of myself as a painter. Painting is my way of curing my past hurts. When I pick up the brush, I feel calm and pleasant. I have been reborn in the art world," Kong said.

Crazy Nana



Photos provided by Kong Ning



1984

"I still don't think of myself as a painter. Painting is my way of curing my past hurts. When I pick up the brush, I feel calm and pleasant. I have been reborn in the art world."



Releasing



Marriage

Essayist writes on the pleasure of physical movement

By Charles Zhu

John Casey, winner of the 1989 National Book Award for his novel *Spartina*, talks about his experience of exercising from middle age into old age in *Room for Improvement*, a new collection of essays that are a personal and joyful self-portrait of a writer who loves going to extremes.

In the tradition of Hemingway's *Old Man and Sea*, he writes with beautiful narrative about a sportive and tough Rhode Island fisherman in *Spartina*, a modern classic, and his daughter in the ensuing *Compass Rose*.

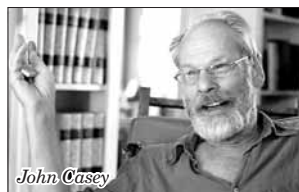
When he is not writing, he goes skating, climbing and running. Sports seem to be an essential part of his life. He celebrated his 70th birthday by running a 70 kilometer marathon of his own devising that included rowing, bicycling, skating and trotting with his dog for a mile.

Casey attended Harvard Law School and the Iowa Writers' Workshop at the University of Iowa. He currently lives with his wife, the artist Rosamond Casey, and their daughters Julia and Clare in Charlottesville, Virginia, where he teaches English literature at the University of Virginia.

These are the essays that portray with tenderness and humor a lifelong zeal not for drinks or drugs, but for a more natural pleasure: the joy of sport, exercise and rising to any challenge – be it a marathon, a climb up Mount Katahdin or a canoe trip down the Delaware River.

One of the essays describes how he was pinned by a 90-kilogram judo instructor who cried at him, "Come on, white boy. Don't give up." Another tells how he led a lost couple on a yacht through the rocky waterways of Narragansett Bay in a rowboat.

As a student at the University of Iowa, he used to go running in the countryside. Local farmers wondered why a young man was wasting his energy in such a way. For Casey, running was never a waste: it was driven



John Casey

by his quest for health, vanity, adventure, competition and endorphins – what he calls the sheer pleasure of physical movement.

In *The Social Life of the Long-distance Runner*, Casey writes, "From my soccer-playing days, I remembered running laps, wind sprints and other devices of tedium and torture, designed, it seemed at the time, to weed out the unenthusiastic," he writes in *The Social Life of the Long-distance Runner*.

"It is true that friends of mine, usually longer-legged and somewhat reedy, had described attaining a certain pleasurable trance while running long distances, but I had put them in the same category as people who sat through two consecutive showings of *Last Year at Marienbad*."

He described one time he took off his pants to reveal his shorts on a long-distance run, and was watched by a crowd of amused elementary school pupils and their teacher, a sport fisherman and a face-down drunk, before a policeman came up to enquire, "What's your story, Charlie?"

The officer assumed that the only people who ran were boxers-in-training or criminals.

Casey is faithful in recording what really happened and what he really felt in his sportive activities.

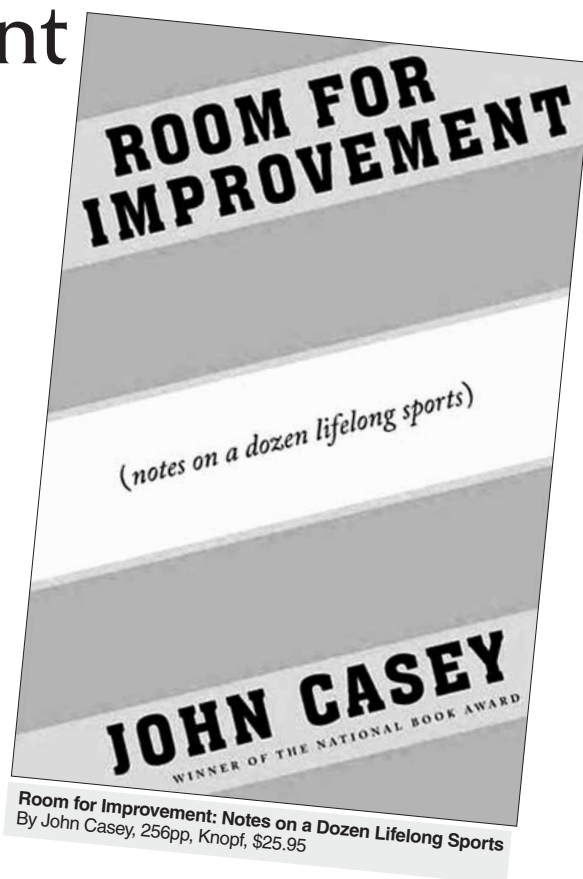
Of his 26-day Outward Bound course in the dead of winter, during which he was left for four days on a remote island in Maine, he wrote the following in his journal after building a temporary shelter: "Tide almost in. Not much time before dark. Boil whelks and mussels. Mussels so-so. Whelks awful. Thank God it's dark so

I can't see them. Just pop the whelk in. I'm sure it's writhing around in my mouth. Could it still be alive? Do they resist boiling? It's fighting back at being chewed, lashing its white wormy coils. I chew it in a rage. Die, repulsive whelk! Eat rose hips to get whelk memory out of my mouth."

As a refined essayist, he describes his experience of cross-country skiing like plowing a canoe on a lake: "Once you begin to get the motion right, the kicking and gliding and riding the driving ski with your body weight floating over it, you may find that you have swallowed your boat whole – that you are your boat moving across a lake of still air and snow."

As a stylist, he recalls rowing with a partner, "After a fast start, we settled into a good rhythm. The air was cool and still, the water smooth. We got into that state of grace rowers call swing. At the catch I heard all four oar blades drop into the water with a single note – a short liquid chink – then the rising note off the stern as the wake gurgled faster during the drive. The three of us were in tune, Brett, I and the boat. Sometimes it can be like that."

Casey offers his wisdom, encouraging people to engage in sports for vanity, health, competition or personal pleasure.



CNPIEC Bookstore book listing

The China National Publication Import and Export Corporation's (CNPIEC) bookstore recommends these new arrivals to Beijing Today readers.

Seeing Things: From Shakespeare to Pixar

By Alan Ackerman, 192pp, University of Toronto Press, \$50

A technological revolution has changed the way we see things. The storytelling media employed by Pixar Animation Studios, Samuel Beckett and William Shakespeare differ greatly, yet these creators share a collective fascination with the nebulous boundary between material objects and our imaginative selves.

Vonnegut and Hemingway: Writers at War

By Lawrence Broer, 240pp, University of South Carolina Press, \$39.95

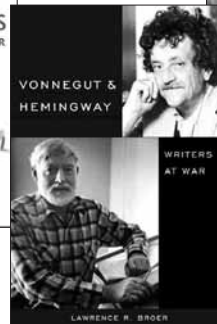
In this comparative study of Kurt Vonnegut and Ernest Hemingway, Lawrence Broer maps the striking intersections of biography and artistry in the works of both writers and compares the ways in which they blend life and art.

Truman Capote and the Legacy of "In Cold Blood"

By Ralph F. Voss, 264pp, University Alabama Press, \$34.95

This book is the anatomy of the origins of an American literary landmark and its legacy. Ralph F. Voss examines Truman Capote and *In Cold Blood*, not only as the crowning achievement of Capote's career, but also a story in itself, focusing on Capote's artfully composed text, his extravagant claims for it as reportage and its larger status in American popular culture.

(By He Jianwei)



Sculptor imagines the birth of universe

By He Jianwei

Stainless steel rocks are Zhan Wang's trademark.

Zhan first used stainless steel in 1995 to create a series of fake "scholar's rocks," a kind of limestone favored by traditional garden designers.

In the past 16 years, Zhan's stainless steel rocks have traveled to the summit of Mount Everest and floated in the high seas. Now they are hanging in the main hall of the Ullens Center for Contemporary Art (UCCA).



Photos provided by UCCA

The rocks in Zhan's previous works represented a dialogue between technology and cultural tradition.

Although the surfaces of the rocks project a dazzling and cold industrial light, their forms are similar to Taihu rock, an ornamental stone used in traditional gardens and parks.

Taihu rock is "sculpted" by wind and water over hundreds and millions of years. It was a favored gift for ancient scholars, leading to its other name as the "scholar's rock."

But in Zhan's latest exhibition, *My Personal Universe*, the stones symbolize fragments from a blast.

In 2010, when he made *One Hour Equals 100 Million Years*, an installation showing how a Taihu stone formed in one hour, he had an idea to represent the birth of the universe with the explosion of a gigantic boulder.

For the project, he recorded an explosion and carried the fragments to his Beijing's studio to fabricate them with stainless steel.

He began to look for a giant boulder in the outskirts of Beijing. But to his disappointment, the only boulder he could find was not as big as he had envisioned. Searching for other



A scene from the blast

options, he remembered Fei County, a place in Shandong Province he visited every year since his creation of stainless steel rocks.

In 1996, he found the Taihu rock that inspired his now-famous works in Fei County with the help of Zhang Yongjian, a sculptor from Shandong Province.

"But this time, I don't want Taihu rock. That is associated with historic literati. All I need is an ordinary, gigantic boulder," Zhan said.

The camera was another problem. Most video cameras can only catch 25 frames per second, which is hardly enough to keep up with the speed of a blast. Zhan decided to borrow six high-speed cameras to capture the explosion from different angles. Each could record 2,000 frames per second.

However, the Chinese mainland has only six high-speed cameras in

total, and two of them are broken. Zhan had to go to Hong Kong and Taiwan to find replacements.

In post-production, he extended the millisecond of the explosion from all six angles into a three-minute clip. The six hi-definition images are projected onto giant screens in the exhibition hall, making the path of each fragment stunningly clear from each angle.

Suspended throughout the exhibition space are more than 5,000 stainless-steel replicas of the stone fragments from the blast: their gleaming surfaces reflect the footage of the explosion into infinity, thus creating an endless abyss reminiscent of the birth of the universe.

"Nobody really knows how the universe was born, because we have been guessing for so long. The best that scientists can offer is a hypothesis. Perhaps in the end, there is no such thing as truth since we exist in a space where it is impossible to learn," Zhan said.

"But that makes creation the perfect opportunity for each of us to look into ourselves to see what we believe about the nature of the universe and the nature of truth."



Zhan Wang

My Personal Universe – Zhan Wang Solo Exhibition

Where: Ullens Center for Contemporary Art (UCCA), 798 Art District, 4 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District

When: Until February 10, 2012, daily except Monday, 10 am – 6 pm

Admission: 15 yuan, 10 yuan for students

Tel: 8459 9269

Great deals for holiday shopping

By Annie Wei

This week, *Beijing Today* scouts for holiday-season deals on online products.

Gifts from The Palace Museum



Leather wallet, 129 yuan



Jewelry box, 99 yuan

Why bother heading to the Forbidden City to get royal items? The Palace Museum has its own Taobao store that offers inexpensive items that make cute and practical gifts.

We like its jewelry box (99 yuan) of two Qing Dynasty outfit dolls riding a dragon boat with a red box and the Chinese ligature for "double happiness."

A doll in a traditional palace dress (29 yuan) should belong in the collection of every little girl. For grown-ups, try the leather wallet (starting from 120 yuan) with printed Chinese calligraphy.

There are also some expensive items, like a fake-antique container from the Shang Dynasty (1600-1046 BC) (19,850 yuan), delicate and handmade.

Website:
gugong1925.taobao.com



Dolls, 85 yuan



The Palace doll, 29 yuan



Chinese king and queen, 85 yuan



Photos provided by The Place Museum

Help with stray cats

Xingyu Tumao, meaning "lucky stray cat," was established in 2001 by 10 women. It has helped 2,000 cats find homes, fostered 200 cats and neutered or spayed 7,000 cats in 150 communities.

All money for the surgeries came from volunteers' donations, which are hard to come by. As a result, it's created an online store where all proceeds go toward future operations.

The store sells many beautiful items. You



Ceramic cup, 22 yuan

can find food bowls (12 to 20 yuan), ceramic mugs with hand-painted cats (39 yuan), postcards (25 yuan), kitty-shaped salt-and-pepper bottles (5 yuan) and candleholders (26 yuan).

The online store is also a platform for those who would like to adopt a stray cat.

Xingyu Tumao also accepts donations, which go directly toward helping the city's feline population.

Website:
shop34792626.taobao.com



Tea set, 118 yuan

Photos provided by Xingyun Tumao



Air purifier, starting at 1,059 yuan at 360buy.com

Breathe healthier!

As the air pollution worsens, purchasing an air purifier for the home or office is a good investment, and getting a dozen masks is probably necessary.

If you are looking for good deals on purifiers, try 360buy.com, a leading online home appliance company. The cheap brands include Yadu, starting from 439 yuan, and Panasonic, starting from 1,059 yuan.

Or you can try a portable air-purifier like mfresh pa-100 (259 yuan) at iliang.taobao.com.

Although there are thousands of cheap masks on Taobao, it's hard to tell if they work or not. To be safe, try an established brand like ResproSportsta (280 yuan) (hi42195.taobao.com).



ResproSportsta, 280 yuan

Photos provided by Google.com

Good flavors, good deals

By Annie Wei

On the menu this week: new winter dishes you can't find anywhere else; authentic Cantonese cooking from a famous chef; and a classic Nanjing restaurant that currently established its second location in town.

Nuage's new Vietnamese hotpot

Don't believe it when people tell you hotpot is only for cold weather, because the Vietnamese like it down south just as much as the Chinese. Nuage, one of the earliest Vietnamese restaurants in town, started a special Saigon hotpot earlier this winter.

The broth is prepared with a dozen ingredients, such as wild mushrooms and tomatoes, and Vietnamese herbs. It gives out a strong aroma.

Each diner is given an independent hotpot, so the broth boils quickly. Try tasting a bit of it – its strong acidity and tartness due to the tomatoes and limes will whet your appetite.

The hotpot set menu (168 yuan) contains three meats: beef tenderloin (58 yuan), scallops (48 yuan for three pieces) and tiger prawns (88 yuan for five pieces). The tenderloin needs to be beaten to avoid being too chewy if overcooked. The scallops and prawns are big, sweet, fresh and tender.

The bean vermicelli is imported from

Vietnam, and one can also add cabbage (18 yuan) and water spinach (18 yuan).

A set menu can happily feed two.

The pumpkin pudding (55 yuan) can be shared by four to six people. The pudding is made of green beans, cream and eggs and put inside a steamed, hollowed-out pumpkin. It does not taste too sweet but delicious.

We like its homemade soy milk (starting from 20 yuan per glass and 88 yuan per draft), with its strong flavor of soybeans. It pairs well with some osmanthus flower and honey. They have two kinds of soy milk, made of soy beans or mixed beans. The mixed soy milk costs 110 yuan per draft.

The second floor offers a great view of Houhai, where people ice skate or sit around enjoying warm drinks and the charm of a cozy winter.

Nuage

Where: 22 Qianhai Dongyan, Haihou area, Xicheng District

Open: 11 am – 10 pm

Tel: 6401 9581



Nuage's winter hotpot, 168 yuan

Photo provided by Nuage

Traditional Cantonese cuisine

The Qi restaurant of the Ritz-Carlton on Financial Street has a new chef: Hong Kong-born Jimmy Wong, who began his career at Lee Garden, a leading restaurant group in Hong Kong since the 1980s.

Wong comes from Singapore, where he has worked for 23 years.

At Lee Garden, Wong said he learned the basics of cooking: be selective with ingredients and bring out the food's natural flavor.

"Many high-end restaurants here are making fusion food," he said, but he prefers cooking authentic dishes.

Wong is still adjusting to how things are done here.

"Many things you find here are fake or of poor quality," he said.

To solve that, he took several months to source suppliers. To ensure water quality, he uses bottled water.

Qi used to have several Chinese regional cuisines, but Wong decided to make it mostly Cantonese with some Beijing dishes. "Cantonese cuisine is what I am good at, and we retained some Beijing dishes because we have many local customers," he said.

Wong said he prefers a



Fish maw soup, 460 yuan

lighter flavor, so his barbecued goose and Peking Duck tend to be less oily.

We recommend the business set menu (688 yuan with 15 percent service fee), including dim sum platter, BBQ platter, double boiled fish maw soup with sea cucumber and sea conch, deep-fried custard rolls, stewed noodles with shrimps and preserved vegetables, and creamy sago mango as dessert.

The restaurant has a dozen soup choices made from nutritious and rare ingredients. They are highly recommended, as such expensive ingredients take experience and knowledge to select and prepare. Most urban dwellers are not good at making it right.

Qi Restaurant

Where: 2F, The Ritz-Carlton Beijing, Financial Street, 1 Jinfang Jie, Xicheng District

Open: 11 am – 2 pm, 5-9 pm

Tel: 6629 6999

Nanjing Dapaidang opens its Sanlitun outlet

Since opening in Haidian last winter, the restaurant Nanjing Dapaidang has built a reputation for having lots of delicious dishes at low prices.

Its second branch launched at Sanlitun Gongsan Shimao Plaza last month.

Dapaidang means "food stalls," so it's not surprising that the restaurant has a wide range of Nanjing snacks in addition to Huaiyang cuisine and popular national dishes.

The new outlet retains its signature antique décor: a wood-carved interior with many big lanterns reminiscent of ancient Nanjing alleys.

Classic Nanjing dishes include yanshuiya (46 yuan), a duck marinated and fried with salt, air-dried and then steamed. It's a thousand-year-old traditional dish. Compared to Peking duck, yanshuiya uses slimmer ducks, so the dish is less greasy.

The restaurant will offer a promotion at its new outlet where select Nanjing dishes are half-off.

For example, stewed meatballs are 11 yuan on Monday but regularly priced 22 yuan; other daily deals: vermicelli in a pot (11



Salty duck, 46 yuan CFP Photo

yuan) on Tuesday, chicken with sour sauce (14 yuan) Wednesday, beef floss with pancakes (14 yuan) on Thursday, pigeon soup with mushroom (16 yuan) on Friday, fried tofu with shrimp egg (13 yuan) on Saturday and glutinous rice (16 yuan) on Sunday.

Nanjing Dapaidang – Sanlitun

Where: 4F, Shimao Baihuo, 13, Gongti Bei Lu, Chaoyang District

Open: 11 am – 9 pm

Tel: 8405 9777

Nanjing Dapaidang – Haidian

Where: Floor 2, Jinlehu, D district, Zhongguancun Guangchang, 15 Zhongguancun Dajie, Haidian District

Open: 10 am – 10 pm

Tel: 5986 3111

Two local bands pay homage to John Lennon and the Beatles

By Li Yi

December 8 is a date that will never be forgotten by fans of John Lennon and the Beatles. Thirty-one years ago, Lennon, a founding member of the Beatles, was gunned down in New York after a recording session.

His legacy, however, lives on, and continues to influence contemporary generations of musicians. Last Friday, two popular local bands played Beatles songs to honor their late hero and his timeless Liverpool band.

Hotpot Music, a renowned local indie label, isn't bashful about their support of at least one thing mainstream: the Beatles. They organized a John Lennon commemorative six years ago, and did so again this year at Mao Livehouse last Friday.

The local band Skyscraper, founded in 2001 as Groovy Blues Rock Band and well known in the indie scene, was the opening act. This marked the third time they've performed at the commemorative show.

They performed "Yesterday" at an increased tempo; a reggae version of "Imagine"; reworked "Come Together" with a bass solo; and turned "Let It Be" into a group sing-along.

"We concentrate on music itself," said lead vocalist Da Fei. "Every band covers songs by classic bands, but rock 'n' roll is about self-expression: no matter who you are or what you play – Beatles music or stuff from other bands – expressing



Don Lemmon, lead vocalist and rhythm guitarist in the Beijing Beatles



Poster for the performance at Mao Livehouse last Friday

your feelings is the most important thing.

"We love the Beatles, but we're not copycats. Copying means nothing for us."

The second band, aptly named the Beijing Beatles, tried to imitate the Beatles more

precisely. The audience seemed captivated, especially since the four performers wore wigs and the lead vocal told jokes throughout the act.

"We don't just cover songs, we get a chance to give a performance," said Ian Burns, the lead vocalist and rhythm guitarist. "We focused on the early years, from 1962 to 1965, when they were not very popular, but we were surprised by the audience's knowledge: they sang along with us."

The Beijing Beatles, who play music as a hobby, had already performed three shows that day. Their reason for doing so many was simple: to share their happiness.

It's as Lennon's wife, Yoko Ono, said in a statement 31 years ago, shortly after her husband's death: "John loved and prayed for the human race. Please pray the same for him."



The Skyscraper performing at Mao Livehouse



Wu Dongwei (right), Skyscraper's lead guitarist

Photos provided by The Skyscraper



Da Fei, Skyscraper's vocalist and rhythm guitarist

Photo by Li Yi

The Beijing Beatles band dons Sgt Peppers Costumes the Beatles wore in 1967.

Photos provided by the Beijing Beatles





“How could a Chinese American become both American and Chinese at the same time?”



Director
Ruby Yang

By Zhang Dongya

San Francisco's Chinatown used to be home to World Theater, a small screening house that brought together Chinese immigrants to watch Cantonese opera. After 10 years of operation, the theater closed in 1996.

Memories of the short-lived theater's key role in the community inspired Chinese American filmmaker and Oscar-winner Ruby Yang to film *A Moment in Time*, a touching documentary about immigrants' lives in the US.

Moments in Chinatown

Ruby Yang met many older Chinese immigrants in San Francisco when she first emigrated from Hong Kong in 1977.

Most were bachelors, as immigrant workers were prohibited from bringing their wives under US law. Loneliness and suffering were the impression they left on Yang.

Later, Yang met Lambert Yam, who was in charge of a theater chain in the US and Canada, including the World Theater in San Francisco.

World Theater was located in San Francisco's Chinatown, and was one of the district's five Chinese theaters. The other four were the Grandview, the Mandarin and the Great Star Theater.

Every morning, around 100 old ladies came at 9:30 am to watch Cantonese opera. Most of the films were love stories about families who were separated, but most had a happy ending.

Some of the old ladies who had been separated from their husbands for many years found that after coming to the US their relationships with their husbands had changed. The “emotional punch” of the films resonated with the crowd, and offered many an escape from the more bitter reality.

“The theater was like a site of shared dreams and a haven from the pressures of everyday life. Immigrants went to reaffirm their sense of who they were, and families brought their children for a brief immersion in Chinese culture. For elderly bachelors and widows, it was a way to transport themselves back to childhood. The younger generations witnessed a surprising break from Chinese American stereotypes,” Yang said.

The theater usually showed the same 30 films, but the old ladies from the neighborhood would gather every day – rain or shine – to watch the same films over and over again. They sang and cried along with the films, and brought morning snacks for each other. Some even brought snacks for the theater personnel.

“Such moments affected my husband and I. When the theater finally closed in 1996, followed by the gradual closure of all North American Chinatown movie theaters, we decided to make a documentary about the experience of the Chinese in America through the films they loved,” Yang said.

Yang interviewed many elderly overseas Chinese. Because many of the old women were unwilling to appear in the film, their children stood in to retell their parents' stories.

For that generation, watching films



A mother and daughter share an emotional moment at a Chinese theater in San Francisco's Chinatown.

with their parents was the only form of childhood entertainment. They ate melon seeds and chicken wings as the older women around them sobbed.

The first generation that emigrated to the US in the 1940s seldom left Chinatown. The area was a community unto itself, and the theater became “the center of the center.” At the community's peak, San Francisco's Chinatown had seven theaters.

They showed early Cantonese films and later kung fu flicks, all of which influenced their lives deeply.

In the 1980s, films by contemporary directors such as Chen Kaige and Zhang Yimou, played at the World Theater. In those days, when America was still ignorant about Chinese cinema, people went to Chinatown for the latest information.

But those born after the 1980s have been drifting away from Chinatown. A

rapid loss of viewers led many Chinese theaters to close down.

But the loss of the theaters hardly meant an end to Chinese cinema. Chinese film has broken into mainstream culture in the US, and Hong Kong directors like John Woo and Wong Kar-Wai and stars like Jackie Chan are known to viewers all over the world. Chinese films are shown in most theaters – but the experience is far different.

When the World Theater closed in 1996, it had an archive of 600 Cantonese films and dozens of other Chinese films. In many cases, its reels contained the world's only remaining copies of the movies. It has since donated that collection to the Hong Kong Film Archive.

But Yang is not merely waxing nostalgic about early Chinese cinema.

She uses the experience of the Chinatown theaters to explore how a Chi-

nese American can be both American and Chinese at the same time.

The principal speakers in *A Moment in Time*, including Jimmie Lee and Chuck Gee, associated Chinese films with their parents' alien, backward world as children. As adults, they found their own reasons to appreciate Chinese film – partly as self-defense of their own Chinese identity.

Today, Yang lives in Beijing. “I live between two cultures and two worlds. I am constantly exploring the same question: what makes a Chinese American become both American and Chinese at the same time?” Yang said.

“Hong Kong people born after the '50s might have the same problems with their identity, because they were brought up in a more British cultural setting. They had little contact with China when growing up,” she said.

“More than 90 percent emigrated to other countries because of this. Today they are emigrating for other reasons, like bad air,” Yang said.

Her next documentary will be about “seeking happiness.” Yang said she will interview Chinese people around the country and try to learn what happiness means to them.

The film *A Moment in Time* and 10 other documentaries are now being screened online by Cnex. Visit ent.sina.com.cn/z/CNEX/ to watch the films. They are expected to be available until next week.



Senior citizens wait outside a Chinese theater in San Francisco for a screening of a Cantonese film.

Photos provided by Kbk Film

A long soak for the winter holidays

By Zhang Dongya

With temperatures dropping, a warm soak can be just the thing to keep out that winter chill. There are many hot spring resorts around these parts, with some offering promotions for the holidays. Find respite at year's end!

It is a unique experience soaking in hot water while snow falls around you.

CFP Photos



The indoor water park named Merry Water World in Tulip Garden

Photo by Mockingbird



A new spot in Jundu

Jundu is an old resort located in Changping District. This year, it opened a new spot for hot springs that has proven popular.

The small hot spring palace has been transformed from a tennis stadium. It's decorated in the traditional Chinese style, with red as its major color. In the walls are embossments of ancient Chinese tales such as the "Goddess Nüwa Repairs the Sky" and "Kuaifu Pursues the Sun." With scrolls of red-crowned cranes, jade pools and blue skies, the entire palace offers a tranquil and calm atmosphere.

A rock garden is in the halls, and hot spring pools are packed in.

When water flows from outside the rock garden, it forms a "waterfall." Visitors who stand underneath the gushing water will find they'll

get a nice back massage.

Inside the rock garden, there is a narrow stream of water that goes over a row of stone slates. Visitors will find it relaxing to lie on these warm slates.

The resort's spring water is pumped from as deep as 3,600 meters underground. In the hall is an exhibition center displaying samples of different rock stratum.

The staff of Jundu said the water has various minerals such as fluorine, iron and sulfur. The water in the pool is treated to remove the iron and sulfur.

There are more than 30 pools in the palace, which are named according to Chinese tales, such as "pool of beauty" and "pool of youth." The Pool of Pengzu is named after a longevity immortal, while the Pool of Laojun builds strong bones. Other pools are named after flora.

All the pools have thermometers. After soaking, you can have a rest and sample the complimentary fruit and beverages. The staff will even deliver your order to you when you're on top of the rockery.

Jundu Travel Resort

Where: 12 Shisanling Shuikulu, Changping District

Getting there: Drive

along Badaling Expressway and take Exit 32, then drive to Xiguan Roundabout and turn right. Drive east along Zhengfu Jie to Dongguan; turn left and drive north. You will arrive after 10 minutes. Alternatively, you can take Bus 643 or 888 to Jundu Dujiacun.

Admission: 158 yuan, 198 yuan with dinner; 880 yuan for a standard room with private pool

Open: 24 hours
Tel: 6071 3073

Traditional Jiuhua

Jiuhua Spa and Resort is one of Beijing's oldest and most popular hot spring resorts. The water's source is Xiaotang Mountain, known for its hot springs for more than three centuries.

Stories say the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911) imperial family frequented Xiaotangshan, and that locals have taken therapeutic baths there to treat rheumatism and other ailments for the past 200 years.

It has a big lake with hot springs and small pools scattered around. All the small pools are filled with hot springs with herbal medicines. The pools' cobblestones walls can be used to massage the body.

Continued on page 21...





Indoor hot spring pool at Club China Chic



Club China Chic is compact but meticulously designed.



The duplexes in Tulip Garden have their own hot spring pool.



Soaking with rose petals adds romance to the cold season.

Photos by Mockingbird



CFP Photo

...continued from page 20

Beside the lake is a spring that spews hot gas. The water temperature can get as hot as 80 C.

Jiuhua has two courtyards, each with five rooms, a lounge and a meeting room. Each courtyard can accommodate at least 10 people. Each yard has both an indoor and outdoor hot spring pool. It is suitable for get-togethers or parties.

Jiuhua also has wooden and stone rooms for couples or smaller groups of three to five.

During the Christmas holiday, Jiuhua will offer some discounted services, including a 198-yuan foot massage ticket and 298-yuan health care ticket.

Jiuhua Spa and Resort

Where: Daliushu Huandao, Xiaotangshan, Changping District

Getting there: Take Bus 984 to Jiuhuashanzhuang stop, or take Subway Line 5 to Tiantongyuan station, then transfer to Bus 984

Admission: 188 yuan, 1,000-1,500 yuan for four-person villa with private pool

Open: 8:30 am - 1 pm

Tel: 8199 7334

Privacy and romance in Tulip

Tulip Garden is located near the airport, on Dongwei Road. It was named after the flowers that blanket the area in spring and summer.

It has hot springs in private rooms, with the cost included in the lodging fee. There are about 20 standard rooms with hot springs. Different kinds of villa are also equipped with hot spring pools. The AB duplex houses are highly recommended: the A part is a four-star standard room with its own hot spring pool, and the B is a two-bedroom suite with a separate pool. The duplex features wood beds, tables chairs and tatami floors.

Tulip also has a huge indoor water park called Merry Water World, where visitors can go sliding, floating or splashing. During the Christmas holiday, Tulip will have a series of water activities. Christmas tickets cost 588 yuan per person.

Tulip Garden

Where: Dongwei Lu, Chaoyang District

Getting there: Take the Airport Expressway to Weigou, turn off Dongwei Lu, then turn right and drive for another 800 meters

Admission to Merry Water World: 138 yuan on weekdays, 168 yuan on weekends, 60 yuan for kids; 800-950 yuan for a standard room with private pool

Open: 1-10:30 pm weekdays, 9 am - 10:30 pm weekends

Tel: 5166 6846

Chic downtown getaway

Club China Chic, located in Sanyuanqiao, is the getaway most accessible from downtown.

The place is compact but meticulously designed: both its lounge and indoor and outdoor hot spring pools are small. It has three indoor pools offering spa services with milk and rose petals, and five outdoor pools infused with traditional herbal medicines. The pools are labeled according to the herbs they contain, so visitors can decide where to soak depending on their health concerns. Rocks, mini waterfalls and pavilions are part of the landscape.

The admission fee includes a buffet dinner. On the building's second floor is a cafe with books and music.

Visitors who stay overnight can get a room with a private hot spring pool that offers a view of Lido Park. The rooms are decorated simply but tastefully.

The club features a spa with rooms decorated according to exotic locations: Hawaii, Turkey, Bali, Japan and the Aegean. It offers treatments by professional massage therapists.

The underground parking garage is connected to the spa rooms.

Club China Chic

Where: East of Lido Park, 6 Fangyuan Xi Lu, Chaoyang District

Getting there: Head north on Jingshun Lu, then turn right on Jiangtaiqiao. Take another right at the first traffic light, which will take you to the resort.

Admission: 238 yuan (includes buffet dinner), 980 yuan for a standard room with pool

Open: 1 pm - 1 am next day

Tel.: 5827 1199

NFC

Near Field Communication (NFC) is a new technology coming to mobile devices, especially smart phones, that may usher in a mobile payment revolution.

brings all-in-one mobile payments to smart phones



The HTC Ruby



NFC software will be preloaded on all future Nokia handsets, such as the high-end N9, that run on the Symbian or MeeGo operating systems.



The BlackBerry Curve 9350



The Samsung Galaxy Nexus



The Nokia C7

NFC works by using short-range wireless connections to provide intuitive, simple and secure communications between two electronic devices that are in close proximity.

It may soon be possible to pay a bus fare, buy a plane ticket or make an ATM withdrawal or credit card purchase simply by holding a mobile phone near a wireless terminal. Such NFC technology will be coming soon to Nokia phones and those running Google's Android operating system within the next year.

According to the US-based market research firm iSuppli, the adoption of NFC-capable handsets rose 50 per cent in 2011. With the support of Nokia and Google, global usage of NFC technology is expected to begin

an explosive growth phase in 2012.

Leading smart phone brand Nokia said it will support NFC in all-new smart phone models introduced this year. Google said it will support NFC in its Android 2.3 handset software by the end of 2011.

To further increase the momentum, the three largest US mobile phone carriers – AT&T Wireless, Verizon Wireless and T-Mobile – launched a joint venture called ISIS to develop a mobile payment system based on NFC.

The carriers said they are open to collaborating with any bank or credit card company that would like to use ISIS within the next 18 months in hopes of creating an NFC ecosystem in many regions of the US by 2013.

iSuppli said 2012 will be the make-

or-break year for NFC. With all the ongoing and planned NFC trials in different regions of the world – as well as support for the technology by major stakeholders, including wireless operators, financial institutions and banks – iSuppli is hopeful that business models will be established that allow each of the nodes to see value in offering the service.

Beyond mobile payments in cell phones, NFC enables a range of other functions. NFC chips are compatible with contactless smart cards. Devices that are NFC enabled can be used to access secure facilities, such as office buildings and gated apartments.

While there are a limited number of NFC-capable devices on the market at this time, more are arriving every week.

NFC-capable smart phones available today:

1. The Samsung Galaxy Nexus is the latest Google Android phone shipping in the UK, and it will be available in the US later this month. The handset runs Android 4.0 Ice Cream Sandwich. The Samsung Galaxy S II Android 2.3 handset is an entry-level NFC smart phone currently available on the Chinese mainland.

2. The Google Nexus S, a full-featured smart phone running Android 2.3 and manufactured by Samsung, has NFC support built in. The device is now available at retail in the UK, US and more than 27 other countries.

3. The BlackBerry Bold 9930, and the Curve 9350 and 9370, are the first handsets from Research in Motion to include NFC and are now shipping to world markets.

4. The Nokia C7 smart phone contains NFC hardware and, via Symbian Belle, can now be used for NFC tag reading and writing. The C7 will be able to support secure NFC services such as mobile payments from the first half of 2012.

Nokia is also shipping three NFC phones – the Nokia 700, Nokia 701 and Nokia 600. All three run Symbian Belle and will be able to support secure NFC services such as mobile payments from the first half of 2012.

5. The HTC Ruby, also known as the **HTC Amaze 4G**, is a high-end Android device and the first NFC phone from the Taiwanese manufacturer. It is only available from T-Mobile in the US, but may be available to more world markets in the fourth quarter of 2011.

6. A version of the HTC Incredible designed to run China UnionPay's NFC payments via a micro SD-based NFC add-on is now available locally.

7. Microsoft's Windows Phone operating system will offer NFC in 2012. Microsoft plans to include mobile payment technology in its phone OS as part of an effort to narrow Google's lead in handset software. The OS giant has also announced support for NFC in Windows 8.

8. ZTE, now the world's fourth largest mobile phone maker, has announced it will include NFC functionality in its **Android-based QSC6270 platform devices** as well as a number of more entry-level phones from the second quarter of 2012.

(Agencies)

Dining



Celebrate Christmas Eve at CBD International Cuisine

CBD International Cuisine at the Grand Millennium Beijing is offering an amazing variety of Christmas delicacies on December 24.

The elegant buffet includes holiday classics like honey-glazed Gammon ham with apple sauce, roasted turkey with cranberry sauce and giblet jus, lamb legs with marjoram jus, shepherd pie, Christmas pudding with brandy sauce and Christmas log cake.

The seasonal spread costs 1,288 yuan and includes a raffle ticket for an iPad2 and TV giveaway.

Where: CBD International Cuisine, Grand Millennium Beijing, 7 Dongsanhuan Zhong Lu, Chaoyang District

When: December 24

Cost: 1,288 yuan per person

Tel: 8587 6888 ext. 3012



Christmas Eve seafood buffet

Indulge in a lavish seafood buffet of Chinese and international festive specialties at Bloo Dining at Park Plaza Wangfujing. The great raffle prizes and live entertainment are sure to make the evening a memorable one.

Where: Park Plaza Wangfujing, 97 Jinbao Jie, Dongcheng District

When: December 24

Cost: 588 yuan per person

Tel: 8522 1999 ext. 3623



Celebrate and enjoy December at Cafe Swiss

Swissotel Beijing's team of culinary masters are preparing an assortment of seasonal favorites and Christmas delicacies from all over the world.

Join us on this culinary excursion through Switzerland with rich cheese fondue followed by Christmas recipes such as roasted duck breast, Gravad Lox from Sweden and American turkey.

Cafe Swiss celebrates Christmas with a special five-course menu tailored to the palate of seafood, meat and vegan connoisseurs. All guests will be able to choose a starter and main course from the Christmas menu based on their preference of seafood, vegan and meat options.

This delicious treat is available on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day and will be the highlight of this festive season. Invite your family and friends or enjoy a romantic dinner with your loved one. The caroling children's choir will be an especially heart-warming experience.

Reservations are recommended as there are limited seats for walk-in guests. Our regular a la carte menu and festive season delicacies will be available instead of the daily buffet.

Where: Cafe Swiss, Swissotel Beijing, 2

Chaoyangmen Bei Dajie

When: December 24 - 25

Cost: Christmas five-course menu, 388 yuan excluding drinks; 488 yuan with free house wines and beers (all prices subject to 15 percent gratuity)

Tel: 6553 2288 ext. 2127

Cafe 99 - Christmas Eve seafood extravaganza

This Christmas, come dine at the Regent for a seafood Extravaganza and international Christmas delights.

Where: Regent Beijing, 99 Jinbao Jie, Dongcheng District

When: December 24

Cost: 458 yuan per person with soft drinks and juice; 658 yuan per person with soft drinks, juice, selected beer, wine and sparkling wine (all prices subject to 15 percent gratuity)

Tel: 8522 1789

Airline

Fly business class to London for 20,120 yuan on British Airways

Still trying to decide what to do for Christmas and New Year? British Airways is inviting customers from China to spend the holidays in London with a round-trip flat-rate fare of 20,120 yuan in Club World business class.

"Christmas and New Year in London are wonderful times - full of tradition, fun and good cheer," said Kevin McQuillan, British Airways' regional general manager for East Asia. "With our Club World holiday special fare, those looking for a last-minute getaway can soak in the festive atmosphere, ring in the New Year in style and perhaps even take advantage of some post-Christmas sales."

With British Airways' Club World business class, passengers can experience a journey that is designed around their needs. On board, they can enjoy the comfort of a fully flat bed. On departure from Heathrow Terminal 5, Elemis spa treatments and champagne are available at the exclusive Galleries Club Lounges.

The special Club World holiday fare is available for a very limited time and seats are limited. Customers are urged to book as soon as possible at ba.com.



(By Jackie Zhang)

Hotel

Swissotel Beijing named best 'Guest Experience' hotel of 2011

Swissotel Beijing Hong Kong Macau Center was recently awarded as the "Best Guest Experience Hotel 2011." Presented at the 2011 China Travel Service Award, the award recognizes hotels that provide outstanding hospitality in service, diversity in design and contemporary Swiss attributes.

"Travel Services Award 2011," launched by Sohu and the leading market research group

Ipsos, polled almost 1 million Web users, 22 tourism experts and frequent business travelers to rank enterprises and institutions.

This year, there were 51 tourism enterprises and organizations in fierce competition. The "Service Award" was also presented for the first time this year, to recognize the annual level of service and innovation review for hot and emerging businesses in the industry.

Fri, Dec. 16



Exhibition The Metamorphosis – Li Nannan Solo Exhibition

This exhibition presents sculptures by Li Nannan. Animals and plants are the main subjects in her works, which express her wish for the most natural way to communicate with the world.

Where: Aura Gallery, 798 Art District, 2 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Chaoyang District

When: Until January 7, 2012, daily, 10 am – 6 pm

Admission: Free

Tel: 5978 9280

Nightlife WHAI

This newfound band has three members from different ethnic groups, blending rock with Chinese folk.

Where: Jiangjinju Bar, 2 Zhongku Hutong, Dongcheng District

When: 9:30 pm

Admission: 40 yuan advance purchase, 50 yuan at the door

Tel: 8405 0124

Sat, Dec. 17

Nightlife Finger Family

This Beijing punk band celebrates its 3rd birthday tonight, with several guest performers: the hard rock band Emitter and hip-hop duo MC Han and Song.

Where: Mao Livehouse, 111 Gulou Dong Dajie, Dongcheng District

When: 8 pm

Admission: 50 yuan advance purchase, 80 yuan at the door

Tel: 6402 5080

Movie Moon (2009)

Sam Bell is just two weeks away from finishing a lengthy, lonely contract mining Earth's primary source of energy, Helium-3, on the dark side of the moon. Thanks to a glitch in the communications satellite, Bell's only companion on this trip is Gerty, the base's unsophisticated computer, and a recorded message from home. As his contract nears termination, Sam starts suffering from crippling headaches and vivid hallucinations, which leads to a near-fatal accident in a lunar rover.

Where: Broadway Cinematheque, 2/F Building 4, north section of Museum of Modern Art (MOMA), 1 Xiangheyuan Lu, Dongcheng District

When: 5 pm

Admission: 40 yuan

Tel: 8438 8258 ext. 8001



Nightlife Pay Reverence to Rolling Stones and Keith Richards

Two local punk bands – Run Run Loser and Summer Sunshine – perform to celebrate the birthday of Keith Richards, a founding member of the Rolling Stones.

Where: Concert Hall of the National Center for the Performing Arts, 2 Xi Chang'an Jie, Xicheng District

When: 10 pm

Admission: 40 yuan

Tel: 6436 8998

Sun, Dec. 18

Drama Bloody Wedding

Based on the personal tragedy of Spanish playwright Federico Garcia Lorca, this play depicts the marriage of a landowner, the youngest son of a rich family, whose bride has a seven-year affair with another young man.

Where: Penghao Theater, 35 Dongmianhua Hutong, Dongcheng District

When: 7:30 pm

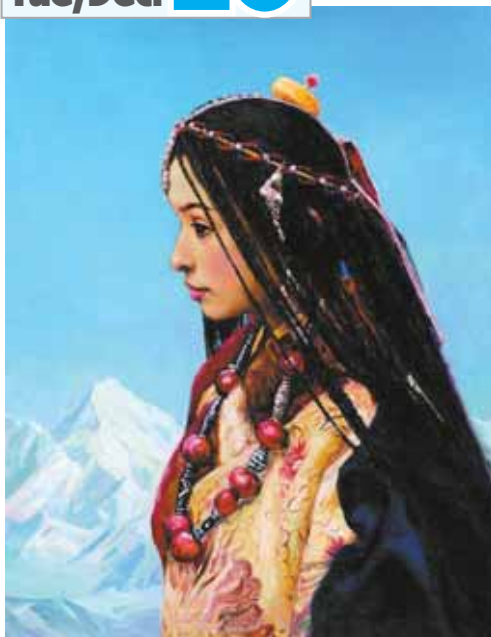
Admission: 50 and 80 yuan

Tel: 6400 6472

Mon, Dec. 19



Tue, Dec. 20



Exhibition Pastoral in the Clouds

This exhibition presents oil paintings and photos by four artists, capturing pastoral scenes of Inner Mongolia, such as children's smiles in the sunshine, wrinkles on an elder's face and the joy of good harvest. Two of the artists were born in Inner Mongolia, and the other two grew up outside the province; all are captivated by the beauty of the province's views and its people.

Where: Times Art Museum, F35-37 D Block, CITC Plaza, 6 Jianwai Dajie, Chaoyang District

When: Until December 28, 10 am – 5 pm

Admission: Free

Tel: 8567 9817

Wed, Dec. 21

Exhibition The Gold of the Tiger – Solo Exhibition of Feng Ye

This exhibition presents more than 20 oil paintings by Feng Ye, who earned a postgraduate degree from the Lu Xun Academy of Fine Arts in 2006. In his paintings, horses gaze into the distance, noble and quiet; knights lie on the grass; and the colors shine like polar lights.

Where: Asia Art Center, 798 Art District, 2 Jiuxianqiao Lu, Changyang District

When: Until January 31, 2012, daily

except Monday, 10 am – 6 pm

Admission: Free

Tel: 5978 9709

Thu, Dec. 22

Movie Three Seasons (1999)

This American-made Vietnamese-language film depicts the past and present of Ho Chi Minh City, formerly Saigon, a city now faced with the invasion of capitalism and globalization.

Where: Club 3, 43 Bei Sanhuan Xi Lu, Haidian District

When: 7:30 pm

Admission: 15 yuan

Tel: 8211 5288

(By He Jianwei)

